

VZCZCXYZ0000  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #1125/01 3412248  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 072248Z DEC 06  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1298  
INFO RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7304  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 8499  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ DEC LIMA 4552  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 9811  
RUEHQH/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5211  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL 3793  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHOND/DIRONDPC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 011125

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2016

TAGS: KJUS PGOV PINR PREL PTER CO

SUBJECT: EX-PARAS SAY PEACE PROCESS OVER, BUT DIVISIONS  
APPEAR IN RANKS; GOC REMAINS FIRM ON JUSTICE PHASE

Classified By: Political Counselor John S. Creamer.  
Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

-----  
Summary  
-----

¶1. (C) On December 6, a spokesman for 59 ex-paramilitary leaders said the peace process with the GOC was over, in response to the GOC's alleged failure to comply with its peace process commitments. Still, the GOC insisted the process was on track. Sergio Caramagna, Director of the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OAS), told us on December 7 the ex-paras were divided into two groups, with a more moderate group committed to work with the GOC. The ex-paras have not threatened violence, and national police officials told us they doubt the ex-paras have the capacity to engage in large-scale disturbances. End summary.

-----  
Paramilitaries Announce End of Peace Process  
-----

¶2. (C) Spokesman Ivan Roberto Duque (AKA "Ernesto Baez") announced on December 6 that 59 ex-paramilitary leaders had called off the peace process in response to the GOC's alleged failure to comply with commitments made during GOC-AUC negotiations. The immediate trigger for the para announcement was President Uribe's order to transfer the 59 from "La Ceja" detention center to the Itagui maximum-security prison in Antioquia Department on December ¶1. Uribe said his decision reflected concerns that the paras were planning to escape from the facility, as well as reports that they had ordered murders from La Ceja. The paramilitaries' announcement followed Peace Commissioner Luis Carlos Restrepo's December 6 visit to Itagui to confirm the GOC's continued commitment to the peace process. Instead, Restrepo was greeted by a tense atmosphere and was only able to speak for five minutes as the paramilitaries left the room one by one.

¶3. (C) After the meeting, Baez said the only two interlocutors the AUC would recognize were an opposition party, the Polo Democratico, and Congress's Chamber of

Representatives Peace Commission. Polo Democratico Senator Gustavo Petro said he did not consider such a role to be appropriate for the Polo, and urged the paras to tell the truth to judicial authorities. Still, if the GOC thought it necessary for the Polo to "play that role," the Party would do so. Meanwhile, the Chamber of Representatives Peace Commission will visit the paramilitary leaders in Itagui on December 11.

¶4. (C) MAPP/OAS Director Sergio Caramagna, who attended Restrepo's meeting with the paras, told us on December 7 that the peace process was in critical condition, but he hoped it could still be saved. Caramagna said the paras were divided into two groups, with a hard-line group led by Baez calling for an end to talks and a more moderate group trying to preserve the process. The second group had approached Caramagna to find a common ground to overcome the crisis. He said the Church and Antioquia's Peace Facilitator Commission could play important roles in the effort to end the impasse.

-----  
GOC Responds with More Determination  
-----

¶5. (C) Restrepo and Minister of Interior and Justice Carlos Holguin publicly reiterated the GOC's commitment to the para process on December 7, but President Uribe warned the former AUC leaders that whomever takes up arms again would be extradited. The President's statement responded to rumors that the former leaders and supporters would resort to violence. Uribe said the first phase of the peace process was over; now it was time apply the Justice and Peace Law

(JPL). He called for the suspension of presidential Decree 2898, which provided a six-month timetable (until February 17th, 2007) for the ex-paras to ratify their intention to participate under the JPL. By suspending the ratification requirement, Uribe hoped to remove a legal obstacle to the taking of para confessions (*version libres*) by the Fiscalia under the JPL.

-----  
Use of Truth or Violence  
-----

¶7. (C) Media reports stated the paras have been using the threat of telling the truth about all of their sponsors and collaborators, but have refrained, at least publicly, from calling for violence. The GOC has repeatedly encouraged the former AUC leaders to tell the truth, and in the meeting in Itagui, Caramagna told us Restrepo called on them to do so. National Police Intelligence analysts said the former leaders no longer have organized military structures big enough to become a significant threat, but could encourage minor disturbances, such as roadblocks and other smaller demonstrations.

DRUCKER

=====CABLE ENDS=====